DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 423 493 CG 028 726

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TITLE Beyond Oppression: Opening the Door to Lesbian, Gay, Transgender & Bisexual Youth.
INSTITUTION Youthquest! Lesbian and Gay Youth Society of British Columbia, Port Coquitlam.
PUB DATE 1998-01-00
NOTE 21p.
AVAILABLE FROM Youthquest!, 1959 Langan Ave., Port Coquitlam, British Columbia, Canada V3C 1L1; Tel: 604-944-6293; Fax: 604-944-6295; e-mail: yquest@hotmail.com; Web site: http://www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/9992
PUB TYPE Opinion Papers (120)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adolescents; *Bisexuality; Foreign Countries; Homophobia; *Homosexuality; Lesbianism; Sexual Identity; Social Development; Young Adults; Youth Programs
IDENTIFIERS British Columbia; *Transsexuals

ABSTRACT

Youthquest! Lesbian and Gay Youth Society of British Columbia provides secure, supportive and comfortable social venues where lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth can meet and explore the social, historic, intellectual, and emotional reality of their identity. The4 organization also provides education and information, and promote dialogue and understanding between youth of diverse orientations and backgrounds. This publication provides information and a creative outlet in a newsletter format. Topics include (1) mission statement and explanation of language; (2) index and society information; (3) "Elegy to a Queer Kid," poem by Roisin Mongey; (4) "Oppression: Reality 101"; (5) "Cursed," poem by Nothing Wolfe; (6) "Validation"; (7) "Organization," which provides information about Youthquest drop-in resource center programs, including volunteer protocols, positions, committees and working groups, community partners and resources; (8) "To Justify Hate-Four Little Lies," an article regarding policies and data sources on homosexuality in British Columbia, which includes a glossary and bibliography. (EMK)

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Youthquest! Lesbian and Gay Youth Society of British Columbia

Beyond Oppression:

Opening the Door to Lesbian, Gay, Transgender & Bisexual Youth

Rhamona Vos-Browning

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BEYOND OPPRESSION:

opening the door to lesbian, gay, transgender & bisexual youth

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Incorporated in 1993, Youthquest! Lesbian and Gay Youth Society of British Columbia is a leading provider of community-based educational outreach and services for gay, lesbian, transgender, bisexual and two-spirited youth in British Columbia.

Youthquest! pioneered *local community-based support, information and advocacy service delivery* for 'gay' and questioning youth in British Columbia. Youthquest! has opened the door to 'gay' youth throughout the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley by providing support and advocacy programs through drop-in centers located in Abbotsford, New Westminster, Port Moody and Surrey. Through expanding On-line services, peer contact and screened resources will soon be available to youth through-out B.C. and the Yukon Territories.

Youthquest! actively pursues educational outreach to youth service providers, educational facilities, youth service and community organizations; and is involved in community work directed at eliminating institutionalized homophobia and heterosexism in all youth-focused institutions and services.

Youthquest! is volunteer based and has no paid staff at this time. It is youth focused, and youth run. Youthquest!'s limited core funding is derived from donations and community fundraising projects. The lack of stable core-funding poses the greatest threat to the continuation of Youthquest!'s successful programs.

Mission Statement:

To provide, at no charge, secure, supportive and comfortable social venues where lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth can meet and explore the social, historic, intellectual and emotional reality of their identity;

To be a resource and education centre, providing: information on support groups and supportive counseling services; AIDS education and resources; access to gay/lesbian/transgender/bisexual history, culture, music, film, and other art forms; workshops and discussion groups on heterosexism, sexism, ageism, racism, media stereotyping and other related social issues;

To actively pursue educational outreach to schools, school boards, police services, counseling and health organizations, political, church and others groups, in an effort to increase awareness of the impact of heterosexism and to eliminate institutionalized homophobia;

To promote positive lesbian/gay/transgender/bisexual images through a speakers series that would feature business leaders, musicians, clergy, politicians and others;

To promote dialogue and understanding between youth of diverse orientations and backgrounds;

To encourage our youth to claim their right to participate fully in the society at large; to take their place within their home communities; to claim the same privileges and responsibilities as every citizen; to celebrate who they are, fully and without shame or apology.

Explanation of terms: Debate is currently raging within the adult lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities over the words we use to self-identify ourselves. For the purposes of this paper, however, I will respect the wishes of our youth membership. "Queer" (or "gay & transgender") will be used when referring to our collective communities. Lesbian, gay, transgendered, TG and bisexual will be used when referring to member communities of the collective.

Cover art by Roisin Mongey, 1996, oil pastel on white bond.

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- Registered British Columbia non profit Society. (BC Society Act #: S-30898)
- Registered Canadian Charitable Organization. (Revenue Charitable Number 1001148-59; BN 13983 7017 RR0001)
- Administration: annualy elected Board of Directors and Youth Advisory Council.

Please direct inquiries to:

General coordinator: Rhamona Vos-Browning
Volunteer coordinator: Theresa Bodin
Comptroller: Nick Petroff

Mailing Address: 1959 Langan Avenue, Port Coquitlam, BC, V3C 1L1

Main Office: [604] 944-6293 **Fax:** [604] 944-6295 **Nanaimo:** [250] 754-0665 **Port Alberni: [250] 723-1946**

recorded information line (courtesy Xtra! West): 604-688-9378 ext. 2065

web site: www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/9992 **E-mail:** yquest@hotmail.com

youth only: pen-pals: yqppp@hotmail.com **youth only: toll free:** 1-877-944-6293

BC Society Act Number: S-30898 Revenue Canada Charitable Number: 1001148-59 (BN 13983 7017 RR0001)

Drop-in sites throughout the Lower Mainland, Frasser Valley and Central Vancouver Island.

SUPPORT YOUTHQUEST! WITHOUT SPENDING AN EXTRA CENT! CALL FOR INFORMATION ABOUT DAIRYLAND'S 'CARING FOR KIDS' FUND AND MOHAWK'S CHARITABLE REBATE CARD.

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ELEGY TO A QUEER KID

A fag handed himself to Leviticus last night
And we all heard a sax playing in-between
some senseless mountains.
The last flash of lightning made us count the
time
I saw his fancy stepping, his heels kick up in
delight,
flick of the wrist, lipstick smack-smack-
smacking,
get up off a dust-licked stench wrenching.
You're just a kid, a queer none the more.
Less hate ain't so bad if you can't feel it, if
you just close it.
Look into these eyes when I speak to your
soul,
don't watch the glass prick
flick of a fag, lipstick smack-smack-melting,
It doesn't matter to the born agains
who tell me what I feel, then spit into these
eyes,
These eyes, these queer queer eyes,
that see those rainbows
as you do, only a little more,
oh freedom's just another word for - PRIDE.
But guess what? Another queer kid died.
Serves him right the fucking fairy.

-Fairy Fairy kill the little fairy-

Asses to the wall, steel toes to the test,
Metal on tooth, knee on eye, blood
everywhere

ONLY

Its all his and his doing,
the boys didn't have time,
And ooooooohh,
what a smooth talking freak am I

it descends upon our cries, on the masses of
dykes and fags and queers and lezs' and
HOE-MO-SEX-YOU-ALLS
We have to keep living, so that the tales are
still told and
Memories of a hell-bent stone of wall
Revives itself in '69
Although I am a human being
So is he, I mean, was.
My feet are so hot they're peeling and
feeling. Once,
just once, I nearly stood close to that fire, but

WHOA

it rang through each of us like a well-loaded
gun.
We're still here and still queer and the
lightning
doesn't seem so bad.
It doesn't matter anyway. I'm just some
queer kid,
with sin on her brain, and AIDS and
molestation and...
is there anything else you'd like to
add?
We're all a bunch of queer kids.
Are you listening?
I am raging and through caging
your disbelief.
I've always known, and so have you.

LOOK AT ME
Another Queer Kid.

Roisin Mongey, 17
for a friend lost to suicide, 1996

oppression:

Youthquest!'s drop-in program has none of the pomp and ceremony of Military Cadets; none of Scouting's merit badges; no 12 steps. For some casual observers, this begs the question: Can the program provide long term benefits to youth?

The short answer is a resounding *YES!* Why that is may take longer to explain.

reality 101:

In a 'crime and punishment' context, enforced isolation via physical segregation is a preferred method of dealing with individuals whose behavior is deemed inappropriate. Prisons are used to isolate, segregate, individuals deemed undesirable. Separation from the group is sufficiently unpleasant to serve as punishment. Even within the prison system, isolation is further used as a punishment for 'problematic' inmates. Variations of this theme - isolation from the group - have been used in virtually all cultures throughout the ages as punishment.

Social isolation does not physically separate an individual from the group, but it does effectively segregate individuals emotionally and psychologically. The effects of social isolation are devastating, and are widely acknowledged as being amongst the most harmful aspects of queer childhood and adolescence [1].

Social isolation, as experienced by queer youth, is rooted in one startling parallelism:
queer youth become aware of their sexual orientation/gender identity
at the same time they become aware of societal disapproval of who they are.

Adolescence is a time of exploring romantic and sexual feelings. It is where we learn appropriate ways to express affection, attraction, romantic emotions, sexual urges and gender roles. A gay or transgendered child's growing awareness of his/her sexual orientation or gender identity, and the negative societal reaction to it, become inextricably interwoven. Negative stereotypes are internalized, a process known as *internalized homophobia*. Shame, confusion and inferiority cover all aspects of romantic and sexual feelings, and, ultimately, the child's overall self image [2]. The fear of "exposure" colours every aspect of a child's life. Being gay or transgendered warps into a secret which, if exposed, threatens disapproval, rejection, ridicule, and physical attack.

The consequences are many [3]. Queer children feel the same intense need to be 'part of the group' experienced by heterosexual children. Many go through the motions of heterosexual 'dating'. Some become over-achievers, focusing everything on an athletic or academic pursuit, allowing the child to avoid age-peer conflicts. Some will gain access to 'peer group' by taking on a radical persona - druggie, dealer, drinker, petty criminal - deflecting attention, real and imagined, from their sexual orientation or gender identification conflicts. By far and large, most will just struggle through, hiding their secret at all costs, and keeping their confusion, their pain and their loneliness to themselves. They live two lives; one public, one internal. This pattern is so common it may be thought of as the 'norm'.

The effects of internalized homophobia and those of being 'closeted' are well documented [4], and are rooted in a gay child's adolescent experience. Children struggling with sexual orientation or gender identity issues perceive real barriers and rarely share their struggle with school staff, counselors, doctors, or clergy. Queer children learn, via observation and experience, an anticipation of rejection. Seldom do they access guidance, support or counseling resources - even in those infrequent situations

where the resource may be queer-positive. Transgendered adolescents are especially vulnerable: gender dysphoria and gender identity are issues with which few youth professionals are aquatinted, let alone qualified to address [5]. Gay and transgendered children show an elevated risk of developing self destructive behavior (anorexia, bulimia, drugs, alcohol, high risk sexual behavior, self mutilation, risk-taking, even suicide) [6], but rarely dot they risk "outing" themselves to a an adult professional [7].

> Dear Youthquest!...
> I would come into your centre but I just cannot for fear of recognition.
> It's scary thinking about what would happen if people found out...
>
> BJ, 19 (1994)

Denied the opportunity to express romantic or sexual feelings, they are likely to focus all their emotional needs onto any person they may chance upon who is receptive, leaving them highly vulnerable to sexual predators. The need to be held and acknowledged is strong, and too often gay children, believing they have no alternatives, will do anything to stay with someone who gives them that sense of acceptance: bad love is better than no love.

cursed

he watches over me,
his stare, burning into my soul
his hands, covering my eyes
his fingers, embracing my movements
he holds me down,
raping me of my innocence
of my love
of my passion
of my beauty
of my appeal
keeping me hidden away
for the purpose of his games

i see the smile on his face
whenever I close my eyes;
his laughter and his words,
pushing me deeper

he lights the match
bringing the flame closer
i can feel his heat
the passionate pain
he scars my face,
my body, my mind
leaving me with his memory
with which i am cursed

i snap at him,
spit at him,
trying to release myself from his restraints
as I watch myself
corrupted
into something only he could love

but still, I return to him
knowing that he is my raptor
he is the one who will love me
he is the only one who cares
even if his emotions are sadistic
as i play his games
giving myself over to his pleasures
as his concubine, the eternal slave
as he wishes me to be

he laps at my wounds,
his tongue entering me,
piercing me
his fingers are the needles
brushing over my skin
injecting me with his ecstasy,
my blood, my elixir of life

the passion fills me,
claiming its wife

there is no escape
he has blinded me with his sex
and drugged me with his love
locking me away from the warm place
which I call home

Nothing Wolfe, 18
(1995)

School and home offer little shelter. Gay youth are frequently the victims of violence at the hands of fellow students and family members [8]. More subtle but even more damaging is the steady barrage of negative images and messages coming from the school yards, pop culture icons, media, youth professionals, clergy, teachers [9], and parents. This onslaught of degrading images creates and enforces the negative self-image held by many queer youth. Unlike youth from other minorities, sexual

minority youth are unlikely to receive any support from their families. Indeed, families are often the first to reject queer youth. Simply, queer youth have no one to share with; few if any, role models [10]; and few sources of support. The resulting loss of self-esteem is manifested in a heightened risk of AIDS and sexually transmitted disease infection, poor health choices, increased likelihood of drug and alcohol abuse, heightened likelihood of involvement with social services or the justice system, and a tragic loss to the society at large [11].

Many gay youth grow up believing the same gay stereotypes as their straight school mates: that AIDS is inevitable (so why bother with abstinence or safer sex); that God and church have no room for them, that long-term friendships and romantic relationships are impossible; that they will live bitter, lonely lives; that adult homosexuals are sexual predators and child molesters; that straight people universally hate queers; that we have no history, have made no contributions to the cultures we come from; that we don't have families; that failure is inevitable. They access queer-youth drop-ins desperate for validation but with little trust in the future.

validation:

The Youthquest! drop-in/resource centre program delivers support and resource services to youth, parents and youth professionals in the home community. The drop-ins and the community activities they generate create a visible lesbian, gay and transgender presence in regions where invisibility is the norm, providing the first step in combating both isolation and stereotyping. The presence of the program offers support even to youth who are unable to access it.

> ... I have been attending Youthquest! for a short time but I am already amazed with the power and strength that we, as youth, draw from each other... Youthquest! is one of the very few environments where I don't need to wear a mask. Most importantly, I am learning, and helping others to learn, to love every part of ourselves as opposed to just the parts that are ... socially acceptable.
>
> Patricia K., 16 (1996)

Drop-ins provide highly isolated and vulnerable youth the opportunity to find peer support and friendship in an atmosphere free of judgment and ridicule. It introduces them to queer and queer-positive adult role models. The program is the spring board to the development of a growing queer and queer positive youth social network which facilitates youth supporting youth. It allows queer teens the opportunity to date and pursue age-appropriate romantic relationships- something taken for granted by heterosexual youth throughout their school years but denied the majority of queer teens [12]. In slang terms, the drop-ins are hang-outs - a "queer 7-11": a place to socialize, access resources, network, eat junk food and to relax.

Peer group, together with the support of gay, lesbian and transgender role models [13], has a remarkable impact on lesbian, gay, transgender and bisexual youth. Peer social support and adult role models successfully counteract internalized homophobia and transphobia, and demonstrate stereotypes for what they are: lies. Fear and shame are replaced with confidence and pride. Peer group fosters the sense of inclusion, of belonging to a community. Confidence and self esteem frequently emerge with explosive enthusiasm. Drop-in participants move from a perspective of resignation to one of active participation in addressing the issues which affect their lives. A sense of "future" develops, a belief that life may just be worth living.

These developments have a positive effect on an adolescents overall 'life-attitude', including attitudes toward sexual health. Peer pressure reinforces the wisdom of abstinence and safer sex principles. The social support and resource access found throughout the drop-in program provide real support and alternatives for youth. The opportunity to socialize at the drop-ins, and to 'party' at larger social functions, allow youth to develop social skills in drug and alcohol free environments, reducing the dependency on 'social lubricants'.

> ... I instantly felt as though I fit in. The feeling of being around people who had been through what I had was wonderful... I have such a support at Youthquest!, that I know now I could face anything or anyone in my life who may condemn me.
>
> Bryan K., 17 (1996)

The peer support network and adult role modeling have an empowering effect; youth participants move from being victims to being survivors. They are significantly less vulnerable to the manipulations of sexual predators; less likely to develop chemical dependencies; less likely to engage in 'risk taking' behaviors. Drop-in participants become motivated to improve family relationships, find ways to stay in or reenter school, join training programs, and develop an attitude of social responsibility and participation.

Organization:

Youthquest! is a volunteer based registered charitable education and service agency. Youthquest! receives no government or agency funding: Funding for ongoing services is derived from community fundraising projects and donations.

Youthquest! provides resource and support services at the local level, via on-line services, drop-in/resource centers and community outreach. Thousands of hours of volunteer dedication have made possible the delivery of service to over 300 youth bulletin board callers and over 500 drop-in clients [14]. Since 1993, Youthquest! has presented at hundreds of information meetings, in-service training sessions, and work shops.

Drop-in sites outside of the Lower Mainland - Fraser Valley region are operated under an affiliation agreement, detailing general protocols and policies. Affiliated drop-in sites have autonomy regarding program development, within the standards and policies set by the Society.

Youthquest! is governed by one overriding principal: the empowerment of youth. Our organizational structure is youth focused and dependent on youth participation. To ensure youth representation at the Board level, the position of Youth Liaison (or 'youth rep'), was formed. Each drop-in site elects two representatives, who act as shop stewards for that site. The youth reps form the Youth Advisory Council, ensuring a strong, effective youth voice at the Board level.

Volunteer protocols:

Youthquest! defines two categories of volunteer: youth and adult. The category of youth volunteer recognizes the desirability of having active youth members become involved at the volunteer level, but also recognizes the need for youth to have free access to the drop-in program as a social venue. To that end, youth volunteers are not prohibited from engaging in social and romantic relationships with other youth members, but are restricted from serving as drop-in volunteers.

Adult volunteers are defined as any individual eighteen years of age or older, who has not participated in the drop-in program within eighteen months prior to making a volunteer application.

The intake procedure is universal, regardless of the volunteer position being applied for. A detailed intake interview is held with the prospective volunteer. The volunteer candidate is provided with a criminal record search form, which must be completed and returned to our office by the police prior to any shift assignment. The candidate is also required to read and sign a statement of confidentiality, an agreement to observe drug and alcohol policies, and an agreement to observe Youthquest! policies regarding interaction and relationships between volunteers and clients.

With the paper work in order, the volunteer candidate is assigned six to eight orientation shifts, supervised by a senior volunteer. The candidate is evaluated during the orientation period, and, if successful, will be placed on regular rotation under the supervision of experienced volunteers for an additional six months. Training workshops are offered several times throughout the year.

Positions:

Youth volunteers: Youth volunteers are an intrinsic part of Youthquest!, and work in a wide range of capacities. They organize and staff fundraising events; keep the office computers working; maintain our bulletin board service (bbs); manage our web site and cyber bbs; attend meetings and work with various in-house and community committees; manage the Youthquest! office and perform a host of miscellaneous duties.

Adult volunteers: Adult volunteers are a welcome and integral component of the Youthquest! structure. Adult volunteers provide experience and guidance, without usurping ownership. They are role models and mentors; maintain the drop-in sites; and serve as an invaluable resource to both the youth membership and the Society. Adult volunteers also serve as bookkeepers, help with fundraising, cultivate resources in the general community, advocate on behalf of youth, and serve as coordinators.

Youth reps: Each drop-in site elects up to two individuals who act as representatives for the youth membership. Youth reps attend and participate at Board meetings, initiate group activities, assist with the organization of events and fundraising efforts; and ensure that the youth membership is kept informed about Society activities. Most importantly, youth reps are responsible for maintaining a clear, strong youth voice at all administrative levels.

Coordinators: Coordinators may be youth or adult volunteers, and are responsible for ensuring that a particular component of Society endeavor runs smoothly. Currently, there are five coordinators on staff: Volunteer, Youth activities, On-line services and Office, directed by the General Coordinator.

Community Resources: Recognizing the relative wealth of skills and abilities already available in many communities, Youthquest! has chosen not to establish its own counselling bureaucracy, but rather to work, where ever possible, with established service providers.

In-service training and education provided to community and school-based service providers regarding sexual and gender identity issues opens the range of services available to lesbian, gay and transgender youth within a given community.

A benefit of this approach is that we have also been able to assemble a growing gay positive resource base which often makes services available pro bono or at token rates, to youth referred through the drop-in program. This approach is cost effective, avoids service duplication and involves the general community in the drop-in program.

Youthquest! has adopted the concept of "the Wheel", a method of making normally expensive services available to youth who could not otherwise access them. In the Wheel, a service provider (such as a counselor), will provide service to a youth in exchange for the youth then donating volunteer time to a community service agency. In this way, the value of the service is reinforced, and the youth is introduced to the value community service.

Speakers Program: Speakers from a variety of backgrounds, careers and vocations talk about their field of interest and lead discussion groups. Through the Speakers Program, queer youth are introduced to fields of endeavor and opportunity previously thought to be closed to them, illustrating in yet one more way that, indeed, there are no limits to human potential.

committees and working groups:

The Review Committee: It is paramount that all youth participating in the drop-in program not only feel safe, but are safe. We are also aware that any volunteer screening process will not be absolutely reliable. To further guard against the possible abuse of it's youth membership, Youthquest! has established an independent body called The Review Committee. The Committee's main function is to provide the youth membership with a safe forum in which to voice complaints regarding volunteer conduct. All affiliated programs are required to initiate Review Committees in their areas.

Note: Review Committee Information is posted at all drop-in sites.

Youth Advisory Council: The youth liaisons come together in a formalized body called the Youth Advisory Council, which meets monthly. The Council acts in an advisory capacity, and contributes to the formation of policy on all issues affecting the society.

Cyber Volunteers: Maintain and staff Youthquest!'s computer bbs, and other on-line projects.

Ad hock committees: Various groups and committees, including the Poster Design Group and the Parade Committee. These informal working groups form around specific projects, terminating with project completion.

community:

Community Partners - project funding:

- **United Church of Canada**, BC Conference (Van Dusen Fund) Start-up funding for Youthquest!'s Abbotsford drop-in program. The Church has also provided a strong letter of support from Executive Secretary Brian Thorpe. 1994
- **Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Women's Equality, Vancouver School Board**, 'You Are Not Alone' poster youth out-reach project with partners **Gay and Lesbian Educators** and **Vancouver Lesbian Connection**. 1994.
- **VanCity Credit Union**: Van City provided majority funding for the "Mobile Visibility Project". MVP was a youth out-reach project developed jointly by Youthquest! and **The Centre**. 1996
- **Vancouver Community Services, The Vanguard Project & the Gay and Lesbian Business Association**, provided additional funding for the "Mobile Visibility Project" in 1996.
- **Government of Canada**, Youth Services Canada Grant ($170,000) Grant development team and steering committee with partners **Ridge Meadows Parks and Leisure Services, Meadow Ridge Rotary Club, Pitt Meadows RCMP, Maple Ridge RCMP, Pitt Meadows Volunteer Fire Department, Maple Ridge Volunteer Fire Department, Maple Ridge Reconnect**, 1996-7.
- **United Way of the Lower Mainland**, Casting the Rainbow Project ($15,000, 50% of project total) Project to review and develop volunteer recruitment strategies which will diversify volunteer participation in Youthquest!'s drop-in program. 1997-98.
- **Vancouver Foundation**, Casting the Rainbow Project ($15,000, 50% of project total) Project to review and develop volunteer recruitment strategies which will diversify volunteer participation in Youthquest!'s drop-in program. 1997-98
- **Government of Canada**, Youth Services Grant (($140,000) Grant development team and steering committee with partners **Ridge Meadows Parks and Leisure Services, Pitt Meadows Lions Club, Pitt Meadows and & Maple Ridge RCMP, Pitt Meadows & Maple Ridge Volunteer Fire Departments, Maple Ridge Community Service Council Reconnect, Ridge-Meadows Diversion Program, Maple Ridge Alcohol and Drug Services, Maple Ridge Family Education Centre, Ministry of Children and Families**, 1997-8.

Community Partners - education videos, books and kits:

- **Susan Tabata, Tabata Production Associates**: "Shaking the Tree", Educational documentary video with discussion guide for secondary school educators, 1996.

- Susan Tabata, Tabata Production Associates: "Talk to Me", Educational documentary video with discussion guide for secondary school students, 1996.
- WestCoast Coalition for Human Dignity: "Choose Dignity, Act Out Against Hate: a Kit for Fighting Hate", Anti-hate education work kit, 1996.
- Marion Crook, Self Counsel Press: "Suicide: teens talk to teens" , Self-help and resource book for teens, 1997.
- McCreary Centre Society, Adolescent Health Survey, LGBT youth component, 1997.

Community Partners - committees, working groups and conferences:

- International Foster Care Organization: "Fostering: A Circle of Caring", Youth, Children and Infants Sub-Committee", 1995.
- Canadian Youth Foundation: "Youth for Youth Health in Canada", Conference, 1995.
- University of British Columbia, Continuing Education in the Health Sciences: "1995 Women, Children and Youth HIV/AIDS", Conference, 1995.
- Douglas College: "Safety Fair '95", Community Resource Fair, 1995
- Affiliation of Mulitcultural Societies and Service Agencies of B.C.: "Mulitcultural Youth Leadership Conference 1996: Live Life! Walk a Mile in My Shoes", Conference workshop, 1996.
- "The Thin Edge of the Wedge: a working conference on the erosion of equity rights in Canada", Conference, 1996.
- Unison Unitarian Church: Unison Service "Youth Issues", Church service, 1997.
- University of British Columbia, School of Social Work: "8th Social Work Symposium, Research Day - Working with Diverse Communities", Conference panel group, 1997.
- Society for Community Development: "Together Against Violence", Community working group, 1997 - ongoing.
- Malaspina University-College/Nanaimo Family Life Association: "Being with Children, Youth and Families Conference", (Nanaimo) Conference workshop and panel, 1997
- Red Cross Abuse Prevention Services (New Westminster) volunteer training panel. 1997 -ongoing.
- Red Cross Abuse Prevention Services (New Westminster) and Youth Volunteer Corps of Canada, planning committee for local program of Youth Volunteer Corps. 1997
- Vancouver General Hospital, Centre for Sexuality, Gender Identity and Reproductive Health: "Gender Dysphoria Program Meeting with Community Groups", Community working group, 1997 - ongoing.
- Rainbow BC Conference, Youth Stream, 1997
- Youth, Children and AIDS Conference, workshop presentation, 1998.

Additional Community Partners (*Primary*):

- Abbotsford Community Services - Reconnect (donated drop-in space, referrals, information & resource sharing,)
- Boundary Health Unit (health assessment programs, referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Centre for Sexuality, Gender Identity & Reproductive Health - Gender Dysphoria Program, Vancouver General Hospital (service provider panel, referrals, information & resource sharing)
- First Line Children and Youth Service Providers (OutReach panel, strategy development, information & resource sharing)
- Foundation for the Advancement of Transgendered Persons Equality (FATE) (information & resource sharing)
- Gay and Lesbian Educators Associations (information & resource sharing, social and educational equity projects)
- Lower Mainland Purpose Society - Reconnect Youth Outreach Services (client support and advocacy, referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Lower Mainland Purpose Society - Youth Health & Resource Clinic (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Lower Mainland Purpose Society - Child and Youth Services Panel with area Service Providers and MCF (service provider panel, referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Ministry of Health - Surrey Drug and Alcohol Out Patients Clinic (donated drop-in space, referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Nanaimo Family Life Association (donated drop-in space, referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Parents, Families, Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) (parent support and informational/educational materials, referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Port Moody Parks and Recreation (donated drop-in space, referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Ridge Meadows Parks and Leisure Services (CYS steering committee partners, in-kind services, community outreach, information & resource sharing)
- The Centre: a community centre serving the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities. (joint participation in a wide variety of areas including youth programs, community education and specific projects, referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Zenith Foundation -transsexual support and education. (informational and educational material development, referrals, information & resource sharing, donated services)

Private sector:

- Dairyland Foods (Caring for Kids Fund fundraising program)

- ETC Concepts Ltd. (donated posters and event passes for youth)
- Harry's off Commercial (donated and at-cost services)
- KeeperKard Express Ltd. (donated and at-cost services)
- Mohawk Oil (Charity rebate card fundraising program)
- North West Counselling Centre (donated services, referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Office Services Ltd. @ Shaughnessy Office Centre (donated and at-cost services)
- Smith and Hughes, Attorneys (donated and at-cost services)
- Starbucks Coffee Company (donated supplies)
- TriCity Now Newspaper (networking, resource development, media advice)
- White Knight Security (donated and at-cost services)

Additional Community Partners *(Secondary)*:

- Abbotsford Community Services - Resolution (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Abbotsford Community Services - Parent teen mediation (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Abbotsford Youth Commission (information & resource sharing)
- ASIA - Asian Society for the Intervention of AIDS (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Britannia Community Centre, Queerlings -lgbt youth group, Vancouver (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Burnaby Information and Community Services Society (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- The Caring Place -lgbt youth group, Richmond (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Coquitlam Volunteer Centre (volunteer outreach and development)
- December 9 Coalition (information & resource sharing, community outreach)
- Douglas College - all sites (student practicum program)
- Eagle Ridge Hospital and Health Care Centre - North Fraser Youth Crisis Response Program (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Eating Disorder Resource Centre Of BC, ST Paul's Hospital (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Federation of BC Foster Parents Association (referrals, information & resource sharing, education exchange,)
- Gay and Lesbian Association /North Social Support Society (Prince George) (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Gay and Lesbian Business Association (community outreach, youth job strategies, information & resource sharing)
- Gay and Lesbian Community Centre of Edmonton (youth program development, information & resource sharing)
- Healing Our Spirit First Nations AIDS Society (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- High Risk Society (transgender support and education, HIV, d& a focus) (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Justice Institute of British Columbia (community outreach, education exchange, information & resource sharing)
- Kwantlan College (student classroom instruction, student practicum program)
- Langley Family Services - Alcohol and Drug Prevention and Recovery Programs (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- LEGAL B.C. - Professional Association of Law Enforcement and Corrections professionals (community outreach, information & resource sharing)
- Maple Ridge Family Education Centre (information & resource sharing)
- Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Community Services (youth support development, information & resource sharing)
- McCreary Centre Society (health assessment programs, information & resource sharing)
- New Westminster School District 40 Community Education (lgbt youth educational program assessment)
- Phoenix Centre: Raven program (youth drug and alcohol program, Kamloops)
- Port Alberni Public Heath Unit (youth program development, information & resource sharing)
- Port Coquitlam Women's Centre (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Sex Workers Alliance of Vancouver (sexual health materials, referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Street Health OUTReach project (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Surrey Central Mental Health (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Surrey Memorial Hospital, Nurse Examiners Program (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Surrey Memorial Hospital Youth Clinic (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Surrey-White Rock Women's Centre (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- University College of the Fraser Valley (student classroom instruction, student practicum program)
- Vancouver Art Therapy Institute (student practicum program)
- Vancouver Crisis Centre (referrals, educational outreach, information & resource sharing)
- Vancouver Pride Society (youth activities)
- Vanguard Project (referrals, information & resource sharing, outreach projects)
- Victoria Youth Pride Society (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Youth Co Youth AIDS Society (referrals, information & resource sharing)
- Youth in Care Network (referrals, information & resource sharing)

Around BC:

- **GALE BC** (Gay & Lesbian Educators): (604) 688-WEST ex.2004, Box 93678, Nelson Park PO, Vancouver, V6E 4L7
- **PFFLAG** (Parents, Friends, Families of Lesbians and Gays): (604) 255-4429
- **Prince George Youth Group**: Josh 250-562-3243
- **Queerlings** (@ Britannia Community Centre) Jason 608-4342 or Trish 874-2071
- **Richmond Youth** (@ the Caring Place) Denise Woodly 231-6424
- **The Centre:** 1170 Bute Street, Vancouver, BC, V6E 1Z6. **684-4901 Youth Services** Jennifer Horgos
  684-6869 Pride Line 684-5307 Office 684-5309 Out on the Shelves 1-800-566-1170 toll free

- **Two Spirit Youth Group** (Urban Native Youth Association) (604) 254-7746
- **Vancouver Lesbian Connection:** (604)254-8458, 876 Commercial Drive, Vancouver

On-line!

- **The Centre:** thecentre@alphagate.com
- **Little Sisters Book & Art Emporium:** phone [604] 669-1753; web: http://www.lsisters.com
- **Street Workers' Alliance of Vancouver** (sexual health & legal info): phone [604] 488-0710
  E-mail: swav@walnet.org web: http://www.walnet.org/csis/groups/swav
- **Victoria Pride Society** : vyps@writeme.com
- **Youthquest!:** e-mail: youthquest@mail.orgweb: www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/9992

To justify hate - four little lies:

Early in 1997, an advocate for youth approached the Coquitlam (District 43) School Board with a recommendation regarding policy and programs to combat homophobia at the school level. While Murray Warren's proposal was rejected by the Coquitlam School Board in favor of a reactive anti-harassment policy [15], a number of local Teachers Associations have adopted policy regarding anti-homophobia work. The British Columbia Teachers Federation, in a 655 to 10 vote, recently adopted a resolution to develop anti-homophobia policy and programs [16], causing a tempest of protest from anti-gay activists.

A small but vociferous association of school trustees and friends has come together under the name 'Trustees Opposed to Unnecessary Curriculum on Homosexuality' (TOUCH). The Surrey School Board, which features at least one member with ties to the anti-gay Citizens Research Institute, has restricted the entry and use of queer and queer-positive library books; educational and resource materials for teachers; and queer youth services information - pending a "review" of all material. Anti-gay 'information' conferences are being held in communities across the province.

What drives anti-gay bigotry?

OPPRESSION JUSTIFIED:

Enslaved Blacks who sought escape were diagnosed as having a psychopathology dubbed 'drapetomania', a curious disease which compelled slaves to run away...

Homosexuality becomes an official mental illness in 1952; in 1973 the American Psychiatric Association reconsiders and removes homosexuality from its diagnostic manual... [17]

The psychology and dynamics of homophobia are largely identical to those of racism and anti-Semitism. Gays, in common with Chinese, Blacks, Jews and others, are (or have been) portrayed as and perceived to be animalistic, hyper sexual, over-visible, heretical, conspiratorial, mentally and physically diseased [18]. Bigotry against lesbian and gay people is often rationalized under four general headings: paedophilia, illness, small numbers and the moral wrath of God.

one: suffer the children

Critics of gay equity, especially as it applies to queer youth, make a point of associating homosexuality with paedophilia [19].

The paedophile stereotype is used extensively, and is amongst the most obvious examples of bigotry seeking justification. Child sexual abuse generates strong emotional reaction amongst the general public, making it an effective tool for anti-gay activists. Anti-gay organizations, presenting as "research institutes", publish a stream of tracts and 'papers' which present gay men as insatiable child predators. One such organization, the Institute for the Scientific Investigation of Sexuality, released a pamphlet in 1985 entitled 'Child molestation and homosexuality' which featured a cover image of a young boy being pulled into a men's bathroom by a male arm. The caption read 'homosexuality is a crime against nature'. The pamphlet stated that gays perpetrate between one-third and one-half of all recorded child molestation, and that gay (men) are at least twelve times more apt to molest children than heterosexuals [20].

The Chair for The Institute for the Scientific Investigation of Sexuality, Paul Cameron, has made a career of vilifying gays. Cameron's credentials and motivations, however, are seriously suspect. Expelled from the American Psychological Association for misrepresenting and falsifying data, his research has never been corroborated by any other credible work, and he has come under heavy criticism from researchers for misusing and misrepresenting the research of others. Despite this, Cameron's data is frequently quoted by anti-gay activists like 'REAL Women's' Laura Geschke, to bolster her argument that gays are destructive predatory addicts unfit to care for children and unworthy of civil rights protection [21].

The documented reality of child sexual abuse does not support the contention that gays are particularly prone to child depredation. A 1978 study of adult males convicted of sexual assault against children found that 47% were classed as fixated (never having developed an adult sexual orientation); 40% were classified as heterosexuals; and 13% were classified as predominately heterosexual bisexuals. [22]. More recently, Pediatrics Magazine published a study which stated that "a child's risk of being molested by his or her relative's **heterosexual partner** is over 100 times greater than by someone who might be identifiable as homosexual, lesbian, or bisexual." The study found that a child's risk of being molested by a 'potentially identifiable lesbian' was 0.4%, and by a homosexual male to be 2% [23].

two: the cure

"Help them, don't support them."

Couched in terms of 'helping the ill", "ex-gay" programs offer to "heal" homosexuals, usually via religious based counseling. Homosexuals Anonymous, Love In Action and Exodus International are amongst the better known; variations can be found virtually in every town or city with an Evangelical congregation. Ex-gay proponents rely heavily on outdated and discredited psychological theories advocating the desirability of 'curing' homosexuality.

Prior to 1970, virtually all psychiatric and psychological schools of thought started with the presumption that homosexuality was a character defect or an illness; that is, something needing to be cured. This view, which reflected but did not question the cultural bias against homosexuality, was reinforced by the fact that psychiatrists worked with patients who could not reconcile their homosexuality with cultural expectations [24].

As late as the 1970's, origin theories were dominated by multiple variations and combinations of three basic theories: 'dominating mother - weak father'; arrested psychosexual development; and hormonal imbalance. Through books such as "Homosexuals - a psychoanalytic study of male homosexuality" written by Irving Bieber, these theories became cultural stereotypes, and favorites of pop psychology [25].

This view of homosexuality, and the credibility of research methodology, failed to withstand objective scrutiny. Twenty-one years after it was officially labeled a disease, homosexuality was removed from the A. P. A.'s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual in 1973.

This decision is not universally accepted by all psychiatric and (especially) psychology professionals. A pronounced feature of this rift is the political and religious bias of those in disagreement with the psychiatric mainstream.

Two of the vocal proponents of the "nurture, not nature" side of the argument are associated with organizations which are vehemently anti-gay. Paul Cameron, by this time with the US-based Family Research Institute, and Elizabeth Moberly, psychologist with Exodus International, make their living as proponents of the idea that sexual orientation is a learned behavior, which can, therefore, be 'unlearned'.

Starting with the premise that homosexuality is innately evil or destructive, Cameron, Moberly and others employ forty year old psychoanalytic behavioral theory to sell their message to receptive audiences of the political and religious far right, despite Cameron's lack of credibility, and Moberly's apparent disdain for psychological research published in the last three decades.

Critics of the 'learned behavior' school outnumber supporters. Christian psychologist Ralf Blair has pointed out that "... the only people who believe change *is* possible are people who think change *should* be possible." The American Psychological Association's 'Fact Sheet on Reparative Therapy' states: "No scientific evidence exits to support the effectiveness of any of the conversion therapies that try to change sexual orientation." Even Sy Rogers, founder of Exodus International, said of conversion therapy: "This does not mean I'm not homosexual..." It does mean, however, that Rogers makes a comfortable living - there is no shortage of lesbian and gay adults desperate to 'fit in' with cultural demands.

No credible evidence has ever been presented which supports the premise that sexual orientation can or should be changed. Reparative, conversion or religious "therapies" do not make gay people straight: through guilt, fear or the threat of hell, they may manipulate some individuals to simulate heterosexual behavior for a period of time.

three: hate by numbers

Often cited "studies" prove conclusively that only two per cent of the general population is gay. At least, this is the common wisdom espoused endlessly in newspaper 'letters' columns. This "fact" is often brandished in such a way as to suggest that the persecution of a target group is somehow justified if there aren't very many of them.

Assessing the percentage of gays and lesbians in the general population is a nightmare task. Kinsey tackled it in 1948 [26], and has been dismissed for bad technique ever since. Researchers give a number of reasons why queer-census taking is so difficult, all pointing back to the stigma attached to homosexuality in this culture.

It is not unusual for lesbian and gay adults to migrate to larger urban centers, in search of safety, anonymity and community. Urban queers, having connected with community, tend to be more "out" than their rural or small town counter part. Fear of being "outed" and the shame and stigma of being gay-identified cause many individuals to *lie to themselves* about their sexual orientation, never mind disclosing to an interviewer [27]. (An example of this principle can be found in HIV outreach, where many materials are now directed to 'men who have sex with men' rather than to 'gay' men.) Despite the difficulties in census taking, studies have been ongoing since Kinsey.

Kinsey's study, Sexual Behavior in the Human Male, was published in 1948. His survey indicated that 4% of men were exclusively homosexual, and a further 6% were homosexual but with incidental heterosexual experience.

More recent surveys have yielded a range of results, but all remarkably in ballpark with Kinsey. J.K. Meyer reported an incidence of exclusive homosexuality in the range of four to six percent. L. Hatfield reported a 6.2 to 10 per cent incidence of homosexuality. R.L. Sell et al reported 7.8 to 11.6 %. [28] Here in British Columbia, the McCreary Centre Society reported that 7 per cent of male teens and 8 percent of female teens did not think of themselves as heterosexual [29].

And that two per cent figure used so often? In 1991 the National Survey of Men was published in Family Planning Perspectives. The survey reported that, in **face to face** interviews, only 2.3 per cent of men surveyed "acknowledges any same sex activity... only one per cent acknowledged exclusive homosexual activity" [30]. What isn't widely publicized is that *the survey's purpose was to examine risky sexual behavior and condom use amongst heterosexual men. Gay and bisexual men were never part of the study group.*

myth 4: the wrath of God

With the collapse of 'factual' arguments supporting bigotry, anti-gay advocates often endorse moral arguments. Lesbians and gays are portrayed as immoral, at least in a religious context. This, of course, removes the debate from the secular and into the arena of belief. At its most extreme, even proponents can not escape the conclusion that what is being presented is pure hate. One example, from a Baptist Church news release, gave this message: *"Filthy face of fag evil... he (a public figure who died of AIDS related complications) declared war on God and nature and lost... Great respect for dead fags is to preach God's Truth to the living... Fags have only two so-called gay rights: AIDS and HELL!"* [31]

The general argument focuses on the supposed Biblical condemnation of homosexuality, and presupposes universal Christian agreement to that position. This is far from the reality. Many Christian churches have revisited their traditional bias against gay people, concluding that cultural bias, not Biblical teaching, is at the root of Christian prejudice [32].

The United Church, in particular, has been very public in its re-examination of anti-gay biases, and has spoken out against "dubious interpretations of scripture" [33].The Anglican and Catholic Churches [34], and even some Evangelical congregations, have commenced the re-examination of their anti-gay bias, with growing support for a full review on church policy as it applies to gays and lesbians. Buddhist scholars, including the Dalai Lama [35], have stated that Buddhist teaching do not endorse anti-gay bigotry. Jewish and Moslem religious scholars and clerics are coming to similar conclusions.

Regardless of where this reexamination of sexual politics leads the various Christian denominations, the argument which supports religious freedom riding rough shod over all other considerations is insupportable. Religious freedom must never serve as justification for the oppression, and, ultimately, the dehumanization, of any group of people.

Glossary:

- **Gender dysphoria:** A state of discord between an individual's anatomical birth-gender and psychological gender.
- **Gender identity:** An individual's sense of being male or being female, encompassing gender roles and gender expectations.
- **Heterosexism:** An ingrained and generally unconscious cultural bias which assumes the superiority of heterosexual romantic and sexual expression, and sexuality, over any other.
- **Homophobia:** A fear and/or distrust of homosexuals. The term was coined in the early 1970's by George Wienberg in the book "Society and the Healthy Homosexual".
- **Sexual identity:** A holistic term encompassing sexual orientation, gender roles and expectations, and sexual preference.
- **Sexual orientation:** Primary gender focus of affectional, romantic and sexual attraction.

- **Sexual preference:** Preferred way of expressing of sexuality; erotic acting out.
- **Transgender:** As used here, a condition in which the anatomical and psychological genders of an individual are not in harmony; a condition which may lead to transexualism. In its broadest context, transgender has been used to refer to all people inclined to cross the gender line, including transvestites, cross-dressers and "gender benders".
- **Transphobia:** A fear and/or distrust of transgendered persons.
- **Transsexual:** As defined by the Transgender Law Reform Project: "anyone who 1) wants to have; 2) has had; or 3) should have had, a sex change (gender reassignment) operation.
- **Lifestyle:** An individual's preferred way of living, encompassing spirituality, profession or vocation, hobbies, recreational and social pursuits.
- **Youth bureaucracy:** As used here: any institution, private or public, which, as part of its regular function, interacts professionally with persons under the age of twenty one, (i.e. elementary and secondary schools, Ministry of Social Services).
- **Youth Professional:** As used here, any professional person who regularly acts in a professional capacity with persons under the age of twenty one, (i.e. teachers, foster parents, social workers).

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3. John C. Gonsiorek, James R. Rudolf, (1991) Homosexuality: Research Applications for Public Policy, Chapter 11, 'Homosexual Identity: Coming Out and Other Developmental Events', citing Cass (1979); Coleman (1982); Dank (1971); Grace (1979) Hencken and O'Dowd (1977) Lee (1977); Plummer (1975); and Troiden (1979, 1988a, 1988b). ["There is an initial stage where individuals where individuals block recognition of same sex feelings through a variety of defensive strategies that may extract a high psychological price for their maintenance..."]
4. John C. Gonsiorek, James D. Weinrich, (1991) Editors, Homosexuality: Research Applications for Public Policy, Sage Publications.
5. a) barbra findlay; Sandra Laframboise, RPN; Deborah Bradey, LPN; Christine Burnham; Setima (Ron) Skolney-Elverson, (1996), Finding Our Place: Transgendered Law Reform Project.
   b) Tg support structures available in B.C. are geared specifically to adults: facilitators of Tg support groups have expressed strong discomfort in working with adolescents. Queer youth groups are the front-line resource for Transgender adolescents. Youthquest! has been especially committed to developing resources and support specifically targeted at Tg youth.
6. Christopher Bagley, Ph.D..; Pierre Tremblay, B.Sc., B.Ed., (1996) Faculty of Social Work, University of Calgary, Suicidality Problems of Gay and Bisexual Males: Evidence from a Random Community Survey of 750 Men aged 18 to 27.
7. Professor James Sears, (1989), quoted from Making Schools Safe For Gay and Lesbian Youth - Breaking the Silence in Schools and Families, Education Report by the Governors Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth, released by the State of Massachusetts 1993. ["Eight out of ten teachers in training harbored anti-gay attitudes..."]
8. Anonymous, (1993), Perspectives in Education: Journal of the University of British Columbia Education Students Association. ["8% of gay youth and 11% of lesbian youth have been physically abused by parents or siblings because of their sexual orientation."]
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10. Raymond Silver (1991), Discrimination and Non-Discrimination Against Gay and Lesbian Teachers in British Columbia, Masters Thesis, Simon Fraser University. ["(gay and lesbian) Teachers are often confused about how to react to the discrimination they observe, particularly when they discern a lack of support from administrative personnel... They find it particularly difficult to counsel (gay) youngsters for fear that administrators, colleagues, and particularly parents will misinterpret their intentions."]

11. Anonymous, (1993), Perspectives in Education: Journal of the University of British Columbia Education Students Association. ["...Many gay adolescents become a financial and social burden to society as a result of self destructive behavior and a failure to stay in school..."]
12. John C. Gonsiorek, James R. Rudolf, citing Grace (1977); Gonsiorek (1982c); and Daher (1981), in Homosexuality: Research Applications for Public Policy, 1991. ["... gay and lesbian adolescents generally do not partake of typical adolescent social and romantic experimentation..."]
13. Dr. Dan Offard, (1997) Centre for the Study of Children at Risk, CBC Radio. ["Children at risk are significantly less likely to develop anti-social or destructive behaviors when they have a significant relationship (peer, adult) and or a strong area of interest."]
14. Youthquest!'s bbs has been on-line since October 1993, making it the longest running queer-youth run and focused bulletin board service in Canada. Our TriCity (includes the cities of Port Coquitlam, Port Moody and Coquitlam, as well as the villages of Anmore and Belcarra) has logged 221 youth; our Abbotsford site has logged 145 youth, and our New Westminster drop-in has logged 148 youth. Combined, 514 youth have accessed Youthquest! drop-in sites 3,274 times. A total of 40 volunteers have worked in various capacities for the Society since the first drop-in opened in August 1993.
15. Murray Warren, Motion made to the Coquitlam (District 43) School Board on February 11, 1997: "That the Board establish a committee comprised of representatives from all the District's partner groups to create a specific program to address the issues of safety and inclusion in schools for sexual minority students and that the Board implement the program. It is also proposed that, based on the committee's recommendations, the Board provide specific and appropriate District and school-based support services for those students." (Rejected on February 25th, in favor *of Policy III-A-32, Personal, Discriminatory, and Sexual Harassment Policy Statement.* III-A-32 requires the involvement of a "trusted adult" and a senior administrator, forcing queer students to risk the consequences of outing themselves to an adult in authority.)

    For comparison, the following policy statement is taken from the Final Draft Of Policy and Regulations, II-C-13- Student Services, adopted by the District 43 School Board on February 11, 1997: "Item B. Aboriginal Education: "Aboriginal education programs will be provided to ensure aboriginal support services, cultural awareness and understanding, as well as language appreciation."
16. Recommendation 73, passed by the British Columbia Teachers Federation on March 17, 1997: That the BCTF create a program to eliminate homophobia and heterosexism within the BC public school system, and that as a first step, the AGM recommend to the Executive Committee that a seven member ad hoc committee be appointed to develop recommendations on strategies for achieving the elimination of homophobia and heterosexism within the BC public school system, and request that the ad hoc committee report back to the 1998 AGM.
17. John C. Gonsiorek, James D. Weinrich, (1991) Editors, Homosexuality: Research Applications for Public Policy, Sage Publications.
18. Gregory M. Herek, (1991) Homosexuality: Research Implications for Public Policy, Chapter 5, 'Stigma, Prejudice, and Violence Against Lesbians and Gay Men'.
19. In area newspapers, Fraser Valley West MP Randy White (Reform), stated flatly "I'm opposed to it. And the reason I'm opposed to it is I'm sick and tired of minority groups of any kind imposing their values on our society. Why don't they just go to the other youth centers in town." (Abbotsford News, Nov. 9, 1994) Abbotsford City Councilor Mark Warawa presented the youth group as a bordello: "If there are any bedrooms, I'll be seeking to have them shut down. " (Abbotsford News, Nov. 2, 1994) Later, quoted in B.C. Report (Dec. 1994) Mr. Warawa mused about the drop-in becoming a hunting ground for paedophiles." For people who have a destructive homosexual drive, such as paedophiles, what better place is there to go for potential prey than to a Youthquest!, where youth are checking out the gay lifestyle?" In a 1994 interview with CKVU Television, he mused about Youthquest! being an affiliate of the North American Man Boy Love Association (NAMBLA).
20. Gregory M. Herek, (1991), Homosexuality: Research Implications for Public Policy, Chapter 5, 'Stigma, Prejudice, and Violence Against Lesbians and Gay Men'.
21. Laura Geschke, President, 'REAL Women of B.C.', (1994), Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Times, Letters Section:
    a) August 17, 1994: ["National studies document that adult homosexual assaults on boys represent 50 per cent of the total child sexual assaults"]
    b) August 21, 1994: ["Their average life span is 42 years, due to AIDS and other infirmities which are inherent to their lifestyle... they should be accorded no more nor less consideration than anyone with any other addiction..."]
22. Gregory M. Herek, (1991) Homosexuality: Research Implications for Public Policy, Chapter 5, 'Stigma, Prejudice, and Violence Against Lesbians and Gay Men'.

23. Carole Jenny, MD, MBA; Thomas A. Roesler, MD; Kimberly L. Poyer, MSW., (July 1994) Pediatrics Magazine, Volume 94, Number 1,. "Are Children at Risk for Sexual Abuse by Homosexuals?".
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27. a) Koray Tanfer, Senior Researcher, National Survey of Men, Quoted from Xtra!West, August 1993, INFOEgale Election Issue.
b) Christopher Bagley, Ph.D.; Pierre Tremblay, B.Sc., B.Ed., (1996) Faculty of Social Work, University of Calgary, Suicidality Problems of Gay and Bisexual Males: Evidence from a Random Community Survey of 750 Men aged 18 to 27, research notes.
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34. Greg Felton (1997), Vatican Can't Keep Out Reforms Forever, Vancouver Courier, March 2, 1997. ["(The) Bible has nothing to say about female or married clergy - *nothing*. All claims that Jesus forbade female clergy, homosexuality etc., must be read into the texts..."]
35. His Holiness, the 14th Dalai Lama, (1994) Interview with Scott Hunt, OUT Magazine, February/March 1994 edition: ["If someone comes to me and asks whether it is OK or not, I will first ask if you have some religious vows to uphold. Then my next question is, What is your companion's opinion? If you both agree... then I think I would say, if two males or two females voluntarily agree to have mutual satisfaction without further implications of harming others, then it is OK. Individual rights means we have the individual right to engage in any action that gives satisfaction, provided it does not harm others. We cannot say on the basis of individual rights that it is OK to steal from someone or to kill someone. Why? These also give individual satisfaction, but this is not sufficient, because it creates harm on others. Any action or activities that do not create a problem for others.... then that kind of action is all right."]

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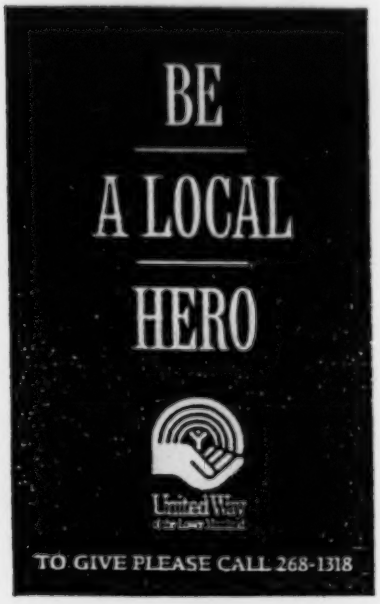

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